Groundwork launched with diplomatic outreach for second minerals forum

PM approves national policy framework to reform gemstones sector

By Khaleeq Kiani

PETROLEUM Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik holds a meeting with Pakistan's ambassadors and high commissioners.—APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has begun soft global marketing of the 2nd Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum, 2026 (PMIF26), scheduled to be held here on April 8 and 9, according to an official announcement on Friday.

Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik held a briefing session with Pakistan's ambassadors and high commissioners posted in key foreign capitals to advance preparations and mobilise international participation for the event.

The meeting was conducted virtually with Pakistan's missions abroad, while senior officials from the petroleum division and representatives of key public sector entities attended in person.

The session focused on aligning diplomatic outreach with national economic priorities and positioning PMIF26 as a premier global platform for investment in Pakistan's mineral and mining sector, the petroleum division said.

During the briefing, the minister explained the aims, scale, and strategic importance of PMIF26 as a forum representing a national economic priority.

He urged ambassadors and high commissioners to actively engage leading mining companies, institutional investors, financial institutions, and relevant government counterparts in their host countries to ensure broad-based and meaningful international participation.

"PMIF26 will serve as a key platform for promoting mining awareness, stimulating economic activity, and attracting sustainable investment into Pakistan's mineral sector," the minister said, adding that the forum would build on the "success of PMIF 2025" held last year.

He said the previous edition of the forum was organised in line with international standards and delivered tangible outcomes.

"The forum attracted participants from over 50 countries and more than 5,000 delegates, while the signing of 14 memorandums of understanding with globally recognised companies validated growing international confidence in Pakistan's mineral sector," he added.

PMIF 2026 is being planned as a strategic. technical conference — alongside an international gemstone exhibition — and a comprehensive resource library aimed at supporting informed as well as data-driven investment decisions.

APP adds: Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday gave in-principle approval to a national policy framework to reform the gemstones sector, align it with international standards, and create a conducive environment for foreign investment, state-run *APP* reported.

Chairing a high-level meeting on the country's gemstone reserves, sectoral reforms, export enhancement, and adoption of modern technology, the prime minister directed strict adherence to timelines outlined in the policy framework this year.

He also instructed immediate steps to establish international-standard laboratories and certification systems.

PM Shehbaz ordered the establishment of two model centres of excellence for gemstones during the year and the engagement of internationally recognised experts to remove obstacles in policy implementation.

He noted that Pakistan's gemstone exports remained negligible despite the country having immense reserves, and called for encouraging private companies, particularly young entrepreneurs, to invest in the sector.

Citing vast reserves of gemstones in Pakistan, he directed geological surveys to determine their location and value, ensuring full consultation with relevant institutions, provincial governments, and stakeholders.

The meeting was told that Pakistan's gemstone reserves were valued at around $450 billion, while annual exports stood at just $5.8 million.

More than 5,000 companies are processing more than 30 types of precious stones in the country. Leading reserves in the country include those of emerald, peridot, ruby, topaz, and aquamarine.

The industries and production ministry has chalked out a comprehensive action plan identifying challenges and priority measures to achieve a $1bn export target over five years through reforms.

This year, the ministry will integrate the gemstone value chain into the national economy, promote local processing for value addition, adopt modern technology, launch private-sector training programmes, and introduce 'Brand Pakistan'.

Dozens held in Turbat, Jiwani for illegal crossings

GWADAR: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and police have arrested more than 70 suspects, including Afghan nationals, in separate operations in Turbat and the coastal town of Jiwani in Balochistan's Makran division over the past 24 hours for attempting to enter Iran illegally.

FIA officials said a joint raid by the agency and police was carried out based on the information about the presence of Afghan nationals.

According to police sources, the Afghan nationals had entered Pakistan illegally from Afghanistan at different times and were living in tents along the M-8 highway.

A senior police officer said the suspects were attempting to cross into Iran through remote border routes. Initial investigations suggested they had links with an organised human smuggling network that facilitated their movement to the area. Separately, the FIA arrested 24 suspects in Jiwani for attempting to travel illegally to Iran by sea.

An FIA spokesperson said the arrests were made during an operation conducted by the FIA Composite Circle Gwadar.
—Behram Baloch

'Pro-people politics can foster national unity'

By Our Staff Correspondent

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail on Friday said that politics was an important social responsibility as well as effective and credible means to improve the lives of ordinary people, raise their intellectual awareness, and free society from superstition and misconceptions.

Speaking to delegations from various districts at Governor House in Quetta, he said that through people-friendly politics, national unity could be promoted while ensuring public rights.

Governor Mandokhail said it was the national duty of every elected public representative to unite people rather than divide them, and to become the voice and support of the voiceless and the marginalised.

Balochistan launches e-bike subsidy, health insurance programme

Enterprise uplift plan extended to Gwadar, Kech and Awaran

By Saleem Shahid

QUETTA: The Balochistan cabinet on Friday approved several major governance and public welfare initiatives.

The decisions, including the launch of e-bikes subsidy scheme, a comprehensive health insurance programme for government employees, and the expansion of an enterprise development initiative to underdeveloped districts, were taken at the 21st meeting of the provincial cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

At the outset of the meeting, the cabinet expressed appreciation to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for initiating key communication and education projects in Balochistan, describing federal support as critical to the province's socio-economic development.

The cabinet approved the launch of e-bikes scheme to provide affordable and environmentally friendly transportation. Under the scheme, students, working women and government employees will receive e-bikes with a 30 per cent government subsidy, while citizens will also be eligible to obtain e-bikes on installments. The cabinet decided that the scheme would be implemented through bank financing to ensure wider access and financial sustainability.

The cabinet was informed that 250,000 government employees currently incur annual medical expenses of Rs6bn to Rs7bn. In response, the cabinet approved a comprehensive health insurance scheme for government employees. The cabinet also approved the audit of advance medical payments and the Public Endowment Fund.

Besides, the extension of Enterprises Development Programme to Gwadar, Kech and Awaran was also approved.

Reaffirming its commitment to good governance, the cabinet agreed on ensuring merit-based appointments across provincial departments, emphasising that meritocracy remains a cornerstone of institutional reform.

Addressing the cabinet meeting, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti thanked the prime minister for his cooperation in launching communication and education projects in Balochistan. He said the electric bike initiative would be available on easy instalments for people from all walks of life.

CM Bugti stressed that resources generated through public taxation are a trust of the people and must be utilised fairly and transparently. "It is unjust that the common and poor people of Balochistan face hardships while a large share of resources is spent on a privileged few," he said.

He announced the government was introducing a comprehensive health insurance scheme for provincial employees and said the expanded Enterprises Development Programme would help guide more of Balochistan's youth towards economic stability.

PC wants Islamabad airport privatised

ISLAMABAD: The board of the Privatisation Commission on Friday took key decisions on major transactions and recommended that Islamabad International Airport be included in the privatisation programme and that fresh expressions of interest (EoIs) be invited to appoint a financial adviser.

The board meeting, chaired by Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatisation and Privatisation Commission Chairman Muhammad Ali, also recommended proceeding with a concession model through an open, competitive process, after the Cabinet Committee on Inter-Governmental Commercial Transactions (CCoIGCT) ruled out a government-to-government mode on Jan 1. The board also authorised the Privatisation Commission to engage in direct negotiations with the ADB for its appointment as financial adviser for the airport transaction.

According to a press release, the decision to invite fresh EoIs was taken to ensure a "more robust and competitive process" after the number of interested parties narrowed from seven to two following legal and technical compliance screening under the prescribed criteria.

The board also recommended termination of the negotiated sale process for a 51 per cent shareholding in House Building Finance Company Ltd (HBFCL).

The Pakistan Mortgage Refinance Company (PMRCL) was the sole bidder and offered Rs4.2 billion against a reference price of Rs13.55bn approved by the Cabinet Committee on Privatisation. The board recommended that the HBFCL privatisation process be initiated afresh with the appointment of a new financial adviser. In addition, the board approved the formation of a transaction committee for the privatisation of Hesco and Sepco.—Amin Ahmed

Amnesty seeks end to Afghans' refoulement

KARACHI: Terming the country's 'Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan' — now in its third and final phase — "unlawful… given it violates… the right to non-refoulement", Amnesty International has called on Pakistan to halt the deportation of Afghan refugees.

In an open letter to PM Shehbaz Sharif, Agnes Callamard — secretary general of the global rights watchdog — noted that Pakistan has been a generous host to refugees for over 40 years, but noted that its policy changed significantly once the repatriation plan was announced in Sept 2023.

"Since then, Amnesty International has documented a complete lack of transparency, due process and accountability in the unlawful arrests, detentions and deportations of Afghan nationals in Pakistan," it said. It also called on the country to create well-resourced and accessible pathways for the registration of refugees, taking proactive measures to expedite the registration of refugees particularly at risk, including but not limited to women and girls, journalists, and those belonging to minority and ethnic communities, and those facing barriers due to gender, disability, language, among others.—Dawn Report

Hazara community's martyrs remembered

HDP pays tribute to victims of 2013 suicide attacks

By Muhammad Akbar Notezai

QUETTA: The Hazara Democratic Party (HDP) on Friday paid rich tributes and offered a "red salute" to the martyrs of Jan 10, 2013, and to all innocent people of Quetta who were killed in acts of violence, saying that even after 13 years their memories remain as fresh as ever.

On Jan 10, 2013, a double suicide attack on a snooker club killed 92 people in a Quetta neighbourhood populated by the Hazara community.

In a statement, the party said that the "bloody days of massacres and incidents of genocide" continue to revive painful memories of the martyrs.

It recalled that following the Jan 10 tragedy, another horrific incident took place on Feb 16, 2013, during a period when the Hazara community was targeted across the province.

The HDP said it had adopted a clear, principled, and people-friendly stance from the very first day against terrorism, and consistently conveyed public concerns to the relevant authorities through peaceful protests.

Paying homage to martyrs, the party reaffirmed its commitment to continue playing its role in promoting brotherhood among all communities in Balochistan.

Hospital staff to wear 'body cams'

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585,000 patients across the province had been registered for the home delivery of cardiac medicines, with doorstep delivery completed for 6,000 patients suffering from hepatitis and tuberculosis.

CM Maryam emphasised that the government would no longer tolerate wastage of public funds or citizens' time, warning that inefficiency and negligence in public hospitals would not be accepted.

Last month, Nishtar Hospital sacked a doctor working as an additional house officer for misbehaving with a patient's family, a video of which had gone viral on social media.

An inquiry committee was also formed to probe the incident.

PTI asking for CBMs

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women and spreading hatred against them, they speak fluently and target them. However, they don't speak against terrorists because they have weapons."

'Governance in KP'

Mr Tarar said the federal and provincial governments of Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan, unlike KP government, were making efforts by building schools, colleges, and hospitals. The governments have run electric buses, constructed modern bus stops, and built modern IT institutions.

"The governance in KP has collapsed," he said, adding that when the ruling PTI in the province was asked about health and education facilities, they were unaware.

He said that land had been allocated for Benazir Hospital in KP 13 years ago, but it could not be constructed.

The federal minister said provincial officials and ministers did not visit KP public hospitals for treatment. "Most patients from KP go to the Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology, as they have no options in the province," he said, adding that the PTI had not provided them with any facilities in more than a decade.

He said South Waziristan faces a scarcity of doctors, with only one male doctor available in the entire district. "The district does not have a single female doctor," he added.

"The PTI couldn't provide a system of drinking water in Tank district, as animals and residents drink water from the same pond," he said.

About education in the province, he said, "At least 4.9 million children and teenagers aged five to 17 years are out of school, with 22,000 schools lacking basic facilities." Also, he said, four districts in the province lacked a single college for girls.

"More than a dozen universities in KP don't have any staff, and the staff in the remaining universities are not being paid," he said.

On the other hand, Mr Tarar added, scandals involving billions of rupees had emerged in Kohistan, with PTI office-bearers implicated.

Afridi finds Karachi 'more welcoming'

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Afridi, who is accompanying the chief minister, said in a post on X prior to departure that their flight had been delayed.

'Dismantling' of tents

Meanwhile, PTI spokesperson Mohammed Ali Bozdar alleged that police removed tents erected outside the party's head office near the Nursery area for the KP CM's reception. However, he clarified that the office had not been sealed.

Earlier, the PTI had claimed in a post on X that Sindh police had sealed the Insaf Secretariat and dismantled a camp set up there to welcome CM Afridi.

Mr Bozdar said the KP chief minister was expected to address party workers and leaders at the head office. He added that after speaking with police and Sindh government officials, he was assured the tents would be returned and the party would be allowed to hold a gathering, provided roads were not blocked.

Dawn reached out to police for comment, but no response was received.

Gathering at Mazar-i-Quaid

Before leaving for Karachi, the KP chief minister said in a post on X that he was bringing Imran Khan's "message" to the province. "My visit is for three days and during this time we have planned various activities," he said, urging people to support the street movement.

He announced a gathering at Mazar-i-Quaid on Sunday at 4:30pm and called on people to participate. "We will hold the biggest gathering in Karachi's history," he claimed.

Sindh Local Government Minister Nasir Hussain Shah said authorities had decided to allow the rally at Mazar-i-Quaid. "We will fully welcome KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi in the province," he said, adding that peaceful political struggle could not be stopped. However, he warned that difficulties could arise if the law was violated.

"There is no restriction on the rally. They have sought permission for rallies in South and Korangi districts, as well as at Jinnah Ground, and permission is being granted," he said, adding that talks with the PTI leadership were ongoing to ensure rallies were held in accordance with the law.

During his visit, CM Afridi will meet PTI leaders, lawyers and business figures, and hold a meeting with Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah. The visit aims to energise the party's newly launched street movement in Karachi and other cities seeking the release of the jailed former prime minister.

Hyderabad visit

The KP chief minister will travel to Hyderabad on Jan 10. The Hyderabad leg includes street protests in Kotri, meetings with journalists, intellectuals and farmers, and a gathering at Insaf House.

The agenda also lists an address to the High Court Bar Association, Hyderabad, though the lawyers' body claimed it had never granted permission for the CM to visit or address the bar.

Earlier, the bar association's general secretary had invited the CM in a letter dated Jan 7. However, in a press release on Jan 8, the HCBA clarified that its executive committee, by a clear majority, had rejected the application. It said the general secretary issued the letter in his personal capacity and used the bar's letterhead without consent.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the PTI Hyderabad chapter alleged police raids on the residences of elected union committee chairpersons and party activists on Thursday, though no arrests were made. Hyderabad Senior Superintendent of Police Adeel Chandio also told *Dawn* that no PTI activists had been arrested.

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TENDER NOTICE
TSE-25260194174 3

Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required.

Note: In All **Procurements** of **GOB** Whether through **Electronic** or **Manual Bid Submission**, It is **Mandatory** for **All Bidders** to **Get Registered** at **Electronic Public Procurement System** of **BPPRA GOB**.

The **Gwadar Development Authority** invites bids from **Eligible Bidders** for execution of following works for the Year **2026** based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates.

S.No	Name of Works	Tender Fee	Bid Security
1.	**Construction of Sewerage Networks for Old Town & Dhore Ghatti, Gwadar Phase-II**	PKR **3,000**	**2%**
	Estimated Cost : 743,863,455		

PROCUREMENTS shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014.

ELIGIBILITY OF BIDDERS:
- Presence in Active Tax Payer List
- The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan
- Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required
- The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work
- Turnover of at least 520,704,418 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm
- Registration with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) C-2 and above (Upto 1000 million) In Relevant Category and Specialized Code is CE09, EE04 (Low Voltage Installation), EE05 (High Voltage Installation), CE10 (i) (General Civil Engineering Works), ME06 (vi) (Miscellaneous Mechanical Equipment).

PROCEDURE OF PROCUREMENT:
Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure

BID SECURITY:
The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of **Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2%** specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank.

TENDER DOCUMENTS:
Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gob.pk and (PKR 3000/- as applicable tender Fee / bidding documents charges) to be deposited in the head of account **GDA Accumulated Collection or Fund** account **3002-0081-0083-6601** through **Bank Al-Habib Ltd. Gwadar Branch**.

ISSUANCE OF TENDER DOCUMENTS:
Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at **www.bppra.gob.pk**

LAST DATE OF BID SUBMISSION:
Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by **30th January, 2026** till 11:00 AM through supplier dashboard.

TENDERS OPENING:
All tenders will be opened on same day at **12:00 PM on EPPS System**

Address: Office of the Executive Engineer (Building-III), Gwadar Development Authority, Gwadar
Phone no: 8649201010 **Fax no:**
Email: info@gda.gov.pk

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